

Upper/lower ab crunches

Both feet can stay on the floor or you can put them up on a bench. Knees should be at a 90° angle; keep your elbows back and cup your fingers behind your ears. Never interlace your fingers behind your head and pull—this causes too much strain on your neck. Press the small of your back into the floor, keep your chin off your chest, and curl your shoulders up until your shoulder blades come off the floor. Exhale as you come up and

inhale as you roll back down.



WHY? During the rest periods, the muscle fibers repair and rebuild themselves in order to adapt to the work you are giving them. It's the breakdown and rebuilding process that allows growth and strength to occur.

Lifting 2-3 days per week will maintain muscular fitness. Workouts need not last longer than one hour per day.

How much? How many? The weight that you choose will depend on your training goals. Training for *endurance* means lifting less weight and more repetitions (10-12 reps) to muscular fatigue. This means that you could have done more reps after a rest period of 30-60 sec. Do 2-3 sets.

Training for *strength* means lifting heavier weight and fewer repetitions (1-6) for 3-6 sets to muscular exhaustion. In other words, you are lifting at a maximal effort until you can do no more. Rest periods between sets is 2-5 min.

If you train for *muscular hypertrophy*, or increased muscle size, then you would lift a moderate to heavy weight, 2-4 sets of 6-8 reps; rest 30-90 seconds between sets.

Why weight train? Weight training benefits your overall health by strengthening bones, maintaining muscle tissue, and decreasing fatigue brought on by normal daily activities. It will also help decrease blood pressure and cholesterol; promotes healthy body weight and body fat; improves balance and coordination; promotes body awareness, self-esteem, and positive self-image. The more lean muscle mass you have, the higher your metabolism will be. Weight training should be incorporated into any physical fitness program, whether you desire improved athletic performance, weight loss, or improved general health.